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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to enhance state policymakers' understanding of education reform networks by providing information about the kinds of networks available, how they work, and the benefits and services they offer to participants. The text is not intended as an exhaustive compendium of every network operating throughout the United States, but it does present information that can help teachers and other school and district leaders learn about approaches to instruction, curriculum design, assessment, professional development, and management that have proved effective in other settings. The information can also help educators adapt these approaches to their own circumstances. The report explores the various kinds of reform networks and discusses how networks enhance state reform, focusing on system flexibility and professional development. Various ways in which states support reform networks are also detailed, such as in managing networks, investing in networks, evaluating networks, communications links, and other methods. Suggestions on how to choose a network are offered. Two appendices feature a guide to major reform networks located throughout the country and some research and evaluation reports of reform networks. (RJM)

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A POLICYMAKERS' GUIDE TO EDUCATION REFORM NETWORKS

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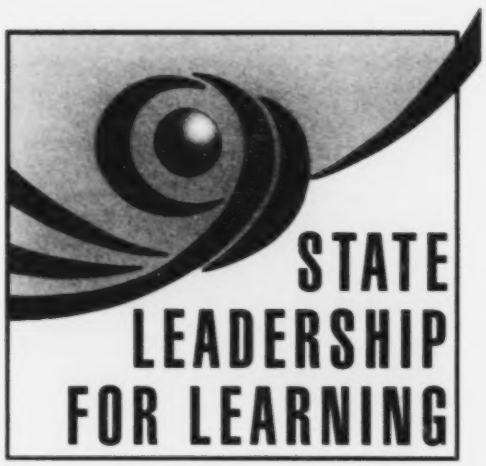

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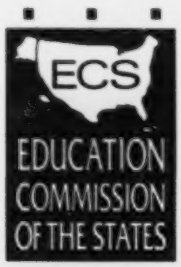

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This guide is designed to enhance state policymakers' understanding of education reform networks — what they are, how they operate and why they have emerged as a powerful and multi-faceted new tool in the effort to improve school quality and student performance. It provides information to help policymakers understand how, and where, networks can enhance state reform efforts and what steps policymakers can take to support networks' continued growth and development.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the establishment of higher academic standards, coupled with a growing need to diversify the kinds of educational opportunities and experiences available to students, has greatly intensified pressures and expectations for schools to improve. State leaders now face major challenges in helping schools, educators and communities implement such changes.

Reform networks — interconnected groups of educators, schools or districts with a common interest in a particular reform and or restructuring approach — can play an important role in addressing these challenges. Networks can help teachers and other school and district leaders learn about approaches to instruction, curriculum design, assessment, professional development and management that have proved effective in other settings, and assist them in adapting these approaches to their own circumstances.

The unique characteristics of networks — flexibility, responsiveness, an emphasis on collaboration, and the sharing of information and resources — make networks an increasingly appealing resource to policymakers concerned about strengthening the capacity of educators, schools and districts to undertake and sustain reform.

The unique characteristics of networks . . . make [them] an increasingly appealing resource to policymakers concerned about strengthening the capacity of educators, schools and districts to undertake and sustain reform.

The guide provides information about the kinds of networks available, how they work and the benefits and services they offer to participants. It also features an appendix that provides a thumbnail description of a number of major reform networks, including what they focus on, how they are organized, what services they provide and how to obtain additional information about them.

This guide is not intended to be an exhaustive compendium of every network operating in states and communities. We invite readers to send ECS additional information.

WHAT ARE REFORM NETWORKS?

Reform networks are interconnected groups of educators, schools or districts with a common interest in a specific reform approach. They come in all sizes, shapes and flavors.

Some networks are small and relatively unstructured. Others are large and well-organized enough to pay for full-time staff, hold annual meetings, publish newsletters and journals, produce research on best practices and provide electronic bulletin boards to allow their members to stay in touch.

Some networks focus on a specific subject, such as reading or mathematics, while others target specific topics, such as assessment, literacy or minority student achievement. Still other networks offer a focused approach to reform and restructuring through the use of a specific design that links all aspects of the school or district — curriculum, instruction, assessment, staff training and school management.

Some networks offer a vision or a set of ideas about how to improve teaching and learning. Individual teachers and schools can use and adapt these ideas as they wish. Structures and processes are informal, and schools and teachers participating in these types of networks may have little contact with one another.

Other networks rely on more formal structures and processes, including a central staff that provides teachers and school leaders with the information and expertise they need to improve their knowledge and skills in specific ways.

Still other networks focus on helping people from different schools that are engaged in similar reform efforts to support and learn from one another. The network has a presence, but the majority of work (coaching, technical assistance, dissemination of information) is carried out by the practitioners themselves.

History

As a vehicle for spreading innovation, networks are not a recent phenomenon. Lawrence A. Cremin's history of American public education, *The Transformation of the School*, describes the emergence during the 1920s and 1930s of loosely connected networks of schools, districts and teacher education institutions that collaboratively designed, developed and evaluated new approaches to curriculum, instruction and school organization. The materials they produced, in the form of textbooks, monographs, model lesson plans and course syllabi, were disseminated widely among school districts both in the United States and abroad.

In the early 1960s, in response to the former Soviet Union's launch of the Sputnik satellite, a great deal of curriculum reform work was undertaken in the sciences. Typical of these efforts was the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study (BSCS), which assembled a team of prominent scientists, researchers and educators to rethink and redesign the teaching of biology in U.S. elementary and secondary schools. BSCS developed — and, to this day, continues to update and improve — curriculum materials, textbooks and training for a nationwide network of biology teachers interested in refining their knowledge and skills.

During the 1970s, a concerted effort was made to promote the spread of new ideas and practices in public education. The centerpiece of this effort was the federally funded National Diffusion Network (NDN), which catalogued innovative programs and provided detailed information about the implementation requirements, potential benefits and track records of various programs. The NDN was a breakthrough strategy, significantly increasing the access of classroom teachers, principals, schools and districts to new ideas and new ways of doing things.

The education reform movement that took shape following the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 has given rise to explosive growth in the number of networks — and in the numbers of educators, schools and districts participating in them.

Most networks have been initiated by private foundations, universities or professional organizations, such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Some have evolved out of federal grant programs or the regional services units of state education departments. Still others have arisen from school-community partnerships and other collaborative efforts at the local level.

One genre of networks — those focused on "whole-school" reform — has experienced particularly remarkable growth over the past decade. Today, nearly 4,000 schools in 40 states are formally affiliated with whole-school networks such as Accelerated Schools, the Coalition of Essential Schools and New American Schools.

Thousands of other schools across the country, and tens of thousands of teachers, are involved in national, state or local networks with a more specialized focus. These range from the National Writing Project — a Berkeley, California-based network that serves around 160,000 teachers in this country and abroad — to efforts that appeal to a small slice of the teaching population, such as the regional Foxfire networks in the rural South.

Success for All

Success for All began as a focused intervention program for at-risk students in urban elementary schools and has spread to 450 schools in 31 states. The program uses a variety of strategies — all-day kindergarten, performance grouping, one-on-one reading instruction and rigorous assessment methods — to ensure student success in the early grades. It is based on the assumption that although it may take longer for some students to learn to read, success is attainable and maintainable for all. The program has been translated into Spanish for use in schools with high numbers of bilingual students.

Evaluations have shown that Success for All raises student achievement, particularly in reading, while reducing the number of students who are held back a grade or assigned to special education. In a 1996 study, 5th graders participating in Success for All were performing 75% of a grade equivalent ahead of students in a control group.

Source: Johns Hopkins University Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, 1996

The Modern Red Schoolhouse

The Modern Red Schoolhouse network, comprising 40 schools in 11 states, focuses on making all students — regardless of background or learning style — high achievers in core academic subjects by building on the strengths of traditional American education. The program incorporates advanced technology as a critical tool to restructure and strengthen both instruction and school management. It uses E.D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge curriculum for the primary and middle grades and the James Madison series developed by the U.S. Department of Education for upper grades. Summer institutes are used to immerse teachers and principals in the principles and design features of the program.

Increases in achievement — as well as decreases in absenteeism and disciplinary problems — have been recorded in a number of elementary schools using the Modern Red Schoolhouse design. At Hansberry Elementary School in the Bronx, New York, for example, the percentage of students who passed New York's essential-skills test nearly doubled between 1993 and 1995 — rising from 22% to 50% in reading and from 47% to 82% in mathematics.

Source: Education Commission of the States, 1996

Kinds of Networks

Most networks fall into one of the following categories:

- **Whole-school design networks,** which assist schools — and, in some cases, entire districts — to develop a focused approach to reform and restructuring through use of a specific design that links all aspects of the school: curriculum, instruction, assessment, staff training and school management. Such networks generally focus on mobilizing an entire school community around a set of common ideas, and require teachers to step outside their individual roles (in terms of grade level or subject area) and work together toward whole-school improvement.

- **Curriculum networks,** which typically focus on improving curriculum — either across the board or in specific subject areas — through implementation of clearly defined standards, principles or instructional strategies. For example:

  - The National Writing Project, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and Project 2061: Science for All Americans are aimed at improving the teaching of writing, mathematics and science, respectively, in K-12 schools.

  - New Standards has developed an internationally benchmarked system of standards in mathematics, English, language arts, science and applied learning as a focal point of reform at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

  - Turning Points, the Carnegie Middle Grade School State Policy Initiative, emphasizes an interdisciplinary, standards-based approach to improving the middle-school curriculum.

- **Program networks,** which focus on a specific aspect of reform — such as leadership, parent involvement or literacy — offer a program that can be implemented by an individual teacher or by schools and districts. Such programs may or may not be integrated with other reform activities under way in a particular school or district. Examples include Communities in Schools (dropout prevention, school-family-community partnerships), Cross City Campaign (accountability, leadership development) and the Quality Education Network for Minorities (minority student achievement).

In addition, there are hundreds of smaller networks — state, regional and local — organized around various aspects of school reform and restructuring.

As just one example, Denver's Public Education & Business Coalition (PEBC), a nonprofit organization established in 1983, provides advice, training and technical support to a network of 50 schools in six Denver-area districts. With the assistance of PEBC staff, each network school assesses its strengths and weaknesses and then designs a training program customized to meet its particular professional development needs in such areas as reading, writing, mathematics, technology, school-to-career programs and library services. The network also provides opportunities for teachers and principals to interact with one another, both within and across districts.

PEBC, which is supported by several foundations and more than 200 businesses, corporations and individuals in the Denver area, is not unique. There are 75 such business-education coalitions operating in two dozen states. They are connected to one another through a national organization, the Public Education Network.

Accelerated Schools

Accelerated Schools, created in 1986 by Stanford University's Henry Levin, is a network of more than 1,000 elementary and middle schools in 40 states. The program is designed to bring at-risk students into the academic mainstream by providing an education typically restricted to gifted and talented students. Its core belief is that schools should accelerate — not remediate — in order to close the gap between high- and low-achieving students. The growing network of Accelerated Schools is supported by several satellite regional centers and a national center based at Stanford.

In evaluations conducted in 1993 and 1995, Accelerated Schools showed improvement in student achievement and attendance, full inclusion of special-needs children, high levels of parent participation and higher numbers of children meeting traditional criteria for gifted and talented programs. Evaluations also have shown reductions in student suspensions and vandalism, and fewer students repeating grades.

Source: National Center for the Accelerated Schools Project, 1995

Another growing category of networks involves providers of specialized services, such as accounting, accreditation, assessment, insurance and payroll. The primary users of assistance-provider networks are schools and districts that have assumed responsibility for such functions through decentralization or chartering. Assistance providers include both private-sector firms and public entities, such as charter school organizations that have been established in California, Massachusetts and Michigan, or New Mexico's Education Plan for Student Success, which assists schools in the state accreditation process.

Characteristics

For all their differences in size, scope and approach, networks share a number of key attributes:

- Networks offer participants an opportunity to **work with others** to educate themselves in order to better educate students.
- Networks organize their work so that members can be **active participants** rather than passive observers.
- Networks, in contrast to most traditional organizations, have the **flexibility** to organize activities first, and then develop structures to support these activities.
- Networks offer a **developmental approach** to adult learning, allowing members to voice their approval or disapproval, to commit to the network rather than to a particular activity and to be more involved in directing their own learning.
- Networks replace prescription and compliance with problem posing and **problem solving,** open discussion of actions and consequences, and a culture of continuous inquiry.
- The leadership of networks is characterized by **facilitating and linking** rather than by dictating and directing. Leadership of the networks often emerges from the membership itself.

Networks increasingly are an appealing resource to policymakers concerned about strengthening the capacity of educators, schools and districts to undertake and sustain reform. The following section examines some of the ways in which networks serve to strengthen and enhance states' efforts to improve school quality and student achievement.

HOW NETWORKS ENHANCE STATE REFORM

While education-improvement strategies vary from state to state, reform initiatives in most states reflect the influence of two powerful forces: growing demand for a more focused, higher-performing education system, and the increasingly urgent need for a more versatile and adaptable education system.

On the one hand, states are implementing standards as a way to create greater coherence — aligning the various parts of the education system so they work better together. At the same time, they are pursuing new approaches to governance, regulation, funding and accountability — all aimed at transforming the traditional one-size-fits-all school system into a more flexible system of schools capable of meeting the needs of a diverse and rapidly changing society.

While on the surface these two strategies might seem to be in conflict, in fact they complement and, to a great extent, depend upon each other. The need is for schools that are both fixed and free: fixed on the goal of helping all students reach high standards, and free to tailor instructional methods to the needs of the students, parents and communities they serve.

For state leaders, the transition to a school system that is both more coherent and standards-based, as well as more flexible and market-driven, poses complex and difficult challenges. Networks — with their emphasis on innovation, collaboration, flexibility and responsiveness — can serve as a valuable tool and source of assistance for policymakers struggling to address such challenges.

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Standards, Assessment and Accountability

Nearly all states have adopted or are in the process of developing content and performance standards for student achievement. On the near horizon are new assessment and accountability systems that make it possible to more reliably evaluate student, school and district progress toward the standards.

States have taken different approaches to the development and implementation of standards, including:

- **The statewide leadership approach,** in which the state guides the development of consensus standards used by all districts (e.g., Delaware)
- **The local leadership approach,** in which the state requires each district to develop its own set of standards (Iowa)
- **The state-local approach,** in which the state develops model standards and requires each district to develop its own set of standards that "meet or exceed" state standards (Colorado).

The implementation of standards creates a new environment, and teachers and administrators must have the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge they will need to operate effectively within it. Reform networks can help educators, schools and districts learn about approaches to instruction, curriculum design, assessment, professional development and management strategies that have proved effective in other settings, and assist them in adapting these approaches to their own circumstances.

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The New American Schools effort, the National Alliance for School Restructuring and the National Science Foundation's Statewide System Initiatives (SSI) are among a number of networks committed to implementing standards adopted by the states and districts in which they work.

One of the New American Schools designs, Modern Red Schoolhouse, has developed its own standards for student achievement and is working with its host jurisdictions, including Memphis and San Antonio, to determine how best to integrate them with state and/or district standards. In Wisconsin, the governor has used Modern Red Schoolhouse standards as the starting point for statewide discussion of standards.

In addition, a number of networks have sprung up around the design work needed to implement standards-based assessments — for example, New Standards, which is focused on development of performance assessments, and statewide networks in Vermont and California focused on student portfolio evaluation.

In some cases, states that have enacted "academic bankruptcy" laws have found networks to be a useful tool for improving the performance of chronically low-achieving or mismanaged schools. In several states, including California, Florida, Maryland and New Jersey, a school identified as failing may be required to affiliate with a reform network as part of its turn-around plan.

System Flexibility

Flexibility represents a commitment to building an education system that supports strong, competent and adaptable schools, each of which not only responds to state needs and standards but also is focused on the particular strengths, needs and interests of its own students, families and teachers.

While flexibility is no panacea, it offers several advantages over a more rigid system of education. First, school autonomy allows schools to be more responsive to parents' wishes and students' needs. Such responsiveness, in turn, generates greater approval and support on the part of parents. One online network, the Charter School Bulletin Board, provides support and information to organizers, advocates, sponsors of charter school legislation and interested teachers, administrators and parents.

Policies that increase school-level flexibility give educators, parents and students a stronger sense of purpose and responsibility. Schools that have greater control of activities such as planning, budgeting and staffing are more likely to function as a cohesive, focused community rather than as a group of independent practitioners, each responding in his or her own way to a set of externally imposed rules.

Communities in Schools

Communities in Schools (CIS), a 1,000-school network based in Alexandria, Virginia, is the nation's largest stay-in-school program. Working in partnership with school districts, local governments and the business community, CIS focuses on bringing health workers, counselors and other social-service professionals into schools to make it easier for students and their families to use their services. The program offers counseling, job training, home visits with parents, after-school tutoring and field trips to help turn problem students into high achievers. CIS operates in 28 states and serves more than 262,000 students annually.

A federally funded evaluation found CIS has had a positive impact on at-risk youth, improving attendance rates and academic performance.

Source: Urban Institute, 1996

National Writing Project

The National Writing Project (NWP) is a teacher-centered network focused on improving student writing and the teaching of writing. NWP operates on the assumption that successful practicing teachers are the best teachers of other teachers, that teachers need to be in charge of their own learning, and teachers need to write if they are to teach writing.

The network sponsors annual five-week summer institutes as well as year-round, school-based workshops that include teacher demonstrations, reading and research study groups, and writing/editing activities. Based at the University of California at Berkeley, NWP includes more than 160,000 teachers in 48 states, Puerto Rico and Canada.

Finally, flexibility promotes innovation, yielding models that can be replicated in other schools and districts, and encourages schools to use their resources more creatively and efficiently. The plethora of comprehensive reform networks, such as New American Schools (NAS), can provide support to replicate various reform models across the country. For example, the Memphis school district chose to offer six NAS designs to its schools for consideration. Schools decide to affiliate with a design or not. By deciding to work with several networks, the district was able to provide its schools a variety of options to meet the needs of their students. In two years, the number of Memphis schools affiliating with a NAS design has grown to more than 60 schools.

The transition to a more flexible education system requires fundamental changes in the relationship between individual schools and the public agencies that authorize and fund them — state departments of education, local school boards and district administrations. These entities' traditional functions of monitoring and enforcing compliance with rules and regulation must give way to new roles and responsibilities — defining needs, setting broad goals, investing in new ideas and new ways of doing things, and serving as a source of ideas and support for diverse portfolios of strong, initiative-taking schools.

States are pursuing a broad range of policy options to deregulate and diversify schools, including waivers, state education code revisions, site-based management, private contracting, charter schools and public school choice. Such policies allow schools to operate differently and create pressures for them to attract students. But there is no guarantee educators will know how to change what they do, or have a clear vision of possible alternatives. School leaders need to be willing to try out new ideas, reject those that do not work well, keep those that do work and continually explore new approaches.

Networks provide a support system for these innovative ideas and practices to take root and spread. They can assist schools and educators in their efforts to implement diverse and distinctive educational programs that match

their students' needs. Whole-school design networks, in particular, offer valuable insight into, and assistance with, the complex process of school restructuring and improvement.

In a recent study, University of Southern California (USC) researchers found that charter schools with strong connections to national reform networks encountered fewer difficulties during the start-up process and in making the transition "from the dream for a school to an actual flesh-and-blood school." According to the USC study, schools that had greater levels of autonomy, that were linked to supportive networks organizations and that had high levels of parental support "tended to be more successful in creating learning communities."[1]

Professional Development

The growing popularity of networks is a testament to the demand for professional development, technical assistance and other forms of support that grow out of the widely varying interests, needs and experiences of schools and the educators who work in them. Networks provide a wide range of opportunities for professional growth and enrichment by engaging members in varied activities — curriculum workshops, leadership institutes, internships, conferences, study groups, electronic bulletin boards — designed around participants' needs and interests.

These shared activities and experiences serve as organizing tools to keep teachers working together, sharing and learning over time. They create an ongoing, collective discourse that encourages the free flow and exchange of ideas and allows participants to act as both experts and apprentices, teachers and learners.

More traditional professional development is provided by topic and is geared toward helping teachers improve what they do in their individual classroom. It has little effect on what happens in the school as a whole. On the other hand, professional development offered by

Online Charter School Network

The Charter School Bulletin Board and chat group established on America On-line is perhaps the largest charter school network in the nation. Members include charter organizers and advocates, sponsors of charter school legislation and interested teachers, administrators and parents.

The online service features an extensive library that provides access to charter school legislation in various states, the names and phone numbers of assistance providers, news releases and other up-to-the minute information about charter schools.

The widely used discussion bulletin board, along with a weekly two-hour chat session, provides a lively forum for exchanging information and ideas about charter schools. Discussions range from specific questions pertaining to the daily operation of a school, such as the logistics of field trips, to larger issues, such as the role of charter schools in the education reform agenda.

For additional information on this network, contact Frank Dooling at America On-line, or sign on to AOL and then type GO CHARTER.

IMPACT II — The Teachers Network

IMPACT II — The Teachers Network, established in 1979, identifies and connects innovative teachers who exemplify professionalism, independence and creativity within public school systems. IMPACT II provides grants and networking opportunities for teachers in the areas of curriculum, leadership, policy and technology.

The network's membership totals 30,000 teachers in 17 states. Major activities include the Nationwide Teacher Leadership Project, the National Teacher Policy Institute and TeachNet, a World Wide Web site with more than 5,000 pages created by teachers, for teachers.

Evaluation of network activities shows positive impact on student attendance, student behavior, teacher accountability for student achievement and teacher/administrator interaction.

Source: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1993; U.S. Department of Education's Program Effectiveness Panel, 1994

networks, particularly whole-school design networks, helps participants think about how they can work together to improve the school itself, as well as change their own work. Over time, it gives them a common language to describe mutual problems and solutions, so that when, for example, teachers discuss portfolios or principles of a particular design, they are all on the same page.

Networks respect teachers' expertise, allowing them to pool their knowledge and build new ideas about their craft together. Networks provide teachers not just with new knowledge, but also with a motivating and supportive environment in which to go about the risky business of changing the way they teach.

This approach to professional development gives participating educators an important measure of flexibility and self-determination. It provides them with the support, knowledge and encouragement they need to challenge existing practices, try out new ideas, and develop their organizational and instructional leadership skills. Among other things, networks:

- Provide information about instructional approaches that have proved effective in other settings and the support needed to facilitate adaptation of such approaches to a specific school.
- Enable participants to connect with one another across school districts and states to develop a broader and deeper understanding of issues that are important to them.
- Help participants develop, through the collaborative activities of the network, the skills of communication, negotiation and accommodation they need to translate their ideas into practice.
- Strengthen participants' investment in and commitment to reform.

The following section outlines some of the steps state policymakers can take to create an environment that supports the continued growth and development of networks.

HOW STATES SUPPORT REFORM NETWORKS

The continuing proliferation and growing popularity of networks presents policymakers with a number of crucial questions. These questions include the following:

- What should states expect of networks and should they try to "manage" them? If so, how?
- How can states ensure equitable access to networks so that all educators, schools and districts have a chance to benefit from their assistance?
- Should states invest, either directly or indirectly, in networks?
- To what extent should states try to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of networks?

Managing Networks

So far, the majority of states have taken a laissez-faire approach to networks. Decisions about which networks to participate in are made entirely at the local level — by individual teachers or principals, by schools or by districts. For the most part, states have done little in the way of overseeing, limiting or even monitoring network activity; nor have they done much to encourage it.

Several states, however, have taken a different tack. For example:

- California encourages teacher, school and district participation in networks in a variety of ways. It has created a system of statewide networks that link teachers and schools by both grade level (elementary, middle and high school) and by subject area (math, science, language arts and so on). Participation in these and other reform networks is one of the criteria the state uses in awarding restructuring grants to schools and districts.
- Ohio, too, provides incentives for network participation, but with a key requirement: that whatever network a school or district chooses to join must be "research-based."
- Two states — Missouri and Illinois — have opted to support and invest in a select group of networks. Missouri offers incentives to schools and districts that choose to affiliate with either the Accelerated Schools network or the Coalition of Essential Schools. Illinois also offers incentives, giving schools and districts three network choices: Accelerated Schools (elementary schools), Turning Points (middle schools) and the Coalition of Essential Schools (secondary schools).

As reform networks continue to develop and expand, each state must decide for itself whether, and to what extent, it will attempt to "manage" them. There are, however, several factors that every state should take into consideration in defining its role with regard to networks.

For instance, policymakers need to recognize that networks are by nature entrepreneurial; seldom do they work together, so their goals and approaches may be in conflict. It is also important to recognize that all networks are not equal in terms of quality and effectiveness, and that finding the "right" network is, for many schools and districts, a difficult, frustrating and sometimes unproductive experience.

These and other emerging issues point up the need for state leaders to assume a more active role: (1) providing information to help schools and districts assess their options and connect with an appropriate network, and (2) making clear what the state expects to get from an association with networks.

In their role of being information providers, states may take the following steps:

- **Help schools and districts ask the right questions in selecting a network.** States can provide schools and districts with a set of key questions and issues to consider as they evaluate their options, ranging from the level of commitment required to participate in the network to the scope and quality of services offered. (See box on p. 16 entitled "Choosing a Reform Network" for a list of suggested questions.)

- **Collect and disseminate information about the capabilities and track records of networks and other assistance providers.** Information about the capabilities of networks and the effectiveness of their methods is essential to schools and districts as they weigh their options. (See box entitled "Connecting With the 'Right' Network" on p. 17 for a list of suggested activities and actions.)

- **Engage educators, policymakers and networks in a discussion of how to improve the practice of reform.** Many networks use similar approaches or techniques in such areas as student assessment and professional development. State leaders can encourage networks to share their expertise and what they have learned. They can foster dialogue around questions such as, "How would we know a continuously improving school if we saw one?" and "What data should we accept as evidence of improvement?" The goal should be to enable networks to share information, enhance their understanding of how to help schools and make the collective work of school reform more coherent.

As reform networks continue to develop and expand, each state must decide for itself whether, and to what extent, it will attempt to "manage" them.

In making clear state expectations for networks, leaders want to see how networks respond to such issues as:

- **State standards** — Which networks provide support for standards already in place or under development?

- **Assessments** — What is the role of the state versus the role of the district in assessing student achievement? Which are the appropriate networks in a state such as Iowa, which favors local assessment, compared to one with statewide assessments?

- **Costs and services** — What will it cost to affiliate with various networks and what services will the state, districts and schools get in return?

One way in which the state may get answers to these and other questions is to require the networks to provide an annual description of the work provided in the state.

Ensuring Equitable Access to Networks

A well-developed system of reform networks and assistance providers allows all schools to get the kind of advice, training and assistance they need. States have a responsibility to ensure that every community has the opportunity to learn about the potential benefits of networks, and to explore the range of network options available to schools in its district.

While all schools, in theory, should be able to take advantage of greater freedom to improve instruction and student learning, many lack the resources, leadership or, in some cases, the will to do so. In certain instances, schools may demonstrate so little capacity to change and improve that the only way to protect students is for the state to intervene directly — replacing or retraining staff, imposing a turn-around plan or even closing a school altogether.

States must make a greater effort to encourage and support schools struggling with the challenges of reform — especially those serving disproportionately needy student populations. It is particularly important that such schools have adequate information about, and access to, high-quality sources of assistance, including reform networks. (For example, the Roots and Wings design and the Cities in Schools program focus on at-risk students.)

States might consider, for example, creating a team of network specialists, who are available to meet with school staffs, parents and interested community members to help them analyze their needs, strengths and limitations and then select a strategy for change.

It is particularly important that schools have adequate information about, and access to, high-quality sources of assistance, including reform networks.

Choosing a Reform Network

Here are some questions for schools and districts to keep in mind during the process of deciding whether to affiliate with a reform network or other assistance provider:

- Are the network's emphasis, methods and philosophy aligned with the state's, district's and school's reform priorities?
- What level of commitment is required to participate in the network? Is there an option to participate on a trial basis?
- Is the network willing to evaluate its efforts and be held accountable for results? Has the network done so in other settings? With what results?
- Can the network demonstrate effectiveness under existing state and district accountability systems?
- Is the network's structure and organizational capacity adequate to serve the number of teachers and schools that will participate? Will the network have the resources to provide ongoing support and technical assistance that schools and teachers will need? What has been the experience of educators who have worked with the network in other settings?
- How does the network build the capacity of schools and educators to work toward continuous improvement?
- Will individual teachers' participation in network activities be mandatory or voluntary?
- Can the network provide specific cost information? Is participation affordable? Is the network explicit about what services and products are included in the fees?

Another approach is to sponsor design fairs in which school teams from a given district can learn about several networks or whole-school reform models over the course of one or two days. New American Schools (NAS) is organizing such opportunities to enable schools in 10 jurisdictions (states or large cities) to make an informed choice among the seven NAS designs plus others of equal comprehensiveness.

Investing in Networks

What can states do to ensure that a full supply of networks can develop and be available to schools and districts? In most cases, what is needed is not the creation of an entirely new infrastructure, but rather a number of strategic up-front investments and policy changes that create a more hospitable and supportive environment for networks. Among the options available to states:

- **Create a venture capital pool available to districts and schools working to restructure themselves, including those participating in reform networks.** State funds can be provided, on a proposal basis, for a limited time to help nurture school and district improvement efforts, including participating in reform networks. As an example, the Ohio State Department of Education makes venture-capital grants of $25,000 to schools that write proposals showing how they will use their own resources, such as Title I funds, to support schoolwide change. A number of Ohio schools have joined the Success for All Roots and Wings network through this route.
- **Provide incentives for networks to develop and expand.** State leaders can capitalize on the efforts of existing networks by providing incentives for them to adapt to the specific needs of their state's schools and districts — a considerably less expensive option than funding start-up networks. States also can provide incentives for colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations and research institutes to create reform networks and technical-assistance services.

- **Expand the technological capacity of schools and districts.** Technology is a crucial ingredient in nearly all high-performance school designs. Most reform networks require schools to participate in national conversations using up-to-date video, voice and data technologies. State leaders can work with school districts to create and implement a plan to wire the state for modern computer technologies. States can provide the up-front funding needed to create statewide and local networks, including building and cross-building wiring. In addition to initial capital expenditures, states need to plan and budget for ongoing maintenance and upgrading of hardware and software.

- **Develop and implement a statewide data-management system.** All schools — and particularly those engaged in intensive restructuring and reform — need timely, reliable and useful data to inform, evaluate and continuously fine-tune their improvement efforts. A well-designed data-management system ensures comparability of information across districts, and provides schools and districts with the means to automate the information and reporting functions imposed on them by the state and federal governments.

- **Eliminate policies that foster a one-size-fits-all approach to teacher professional development.** A system of diverse schools, each responsible for helping its students achieve at a high level, requires a more diversified professional development system. Policies that give district central offices a virtual monopoly on staff development should give way to policies that encourage the use of multiple providers of teacher professional development.

Connecting With the "Right" Network

In order to make good decisions, schools and districts need information about the capabilities of reform networks and the effectiveness of their methods. Here are some steps that states can take to expand schools' and districts' access to such information:

- Survey schools and districts to identify the various reform networks and other assistance providers that they have participated in or been affiliated with. Ask schools and districts to assess strengths and weaknesses, the quality of services provided and perceived benefits.

- Assemble and analyze statewide survey results. Identify networks and providers that receive positive comments from particular kinds of schools or districts — for example, urban schools or small rural schools.

- Disseminate survey results, in both printed and on-line formats, to all districts and schools in the state, to teacher-training institutions and to the networks and providers themselves.

- Monitor similar publications from other states. Call attention to networks and other assistance providers operating in other states which have the potential to fill needs that the state's districts and schools have identified as unmet.

- Take steps to discourage the use of networks or other providers that have a poor track record or have failed to deliver promised services.

HOW STATES SUPPORT REFORM NETWORKS

Evaluating Networks

It is quite appropriate for states that invest in networks to take steps to evaluate their quality and effectiveness. Networks, like technology and curriculum materials, are resources in an overall state reform strategy. They need to be reviewed from time to time to see if they are meeting student needs at all levels.

To do this, state leaders should keep up-to-date on the latest research about networks — how they perform, how their students do on various assessments and indicators of progress, such as dropout and attendance rates and test scores. As noted in Appendix 1, *Guide to Major Reform Networks*, research is under way on many of the networks.

Networks, like technology components and curriculum materials, need to be reviewed from time to time to see if they are still meeting student needs.

State leaders also can use several other indicators more pertinent to how a network operates in their particular state. For instance:

- **Parent satisfaction** — How satisfied are parents with changes that have arisen from their school's association with a network?
- **Teacher satisfaction** — What do teachers think about the support and professional development? Has working with a network improved the way they function in the classroom? Has it improved the school environment?
- **School climate** — Has the school climate changed as a result of association with the network? Are staff and community working toward the same goals? Is the improved climate making a difference for students?
- **Student achievement** — How has achievement changed since affiliating with a network? What do test scores from "network" schools say about what is working in the school?

A well-designed state evaluation system can help state leaders make decisions about investing in networks and evaluate their contributions.

Communications Link

Efforts to broaden school and district participation in networks must be tied to a larger overall state strategy to strengthen public understanding and acceptance of education reform. Too often, policymakers and educators present solutions that do not address the concerns and questions people have.

In addition, improvement efforts frequently appear to be a fragmented list of activities that do not relate to one another. A strategic communications plan, designed around people's concerns, needs and interests, is a necessary component of any education improvement effort.* It creates a process for listening to people, developing policies that address their concerns and reporting on progress and performance. It also provides a framework for all communications activity so it becomes clear to people how various reform ideas and proposals relate to overall state and district goals.

In the past, when policymakers and educators have tried to "sell" standards and other new policies that did not incorporate public input and address community concerns, their efforts have failed. In contrast, reform initiatives based on stronger public involvement generally have produced positive results.

Two-way communication helps policymakers and educators pinpoint concerns about proposed reforms, fine-tune their ideas and test the assumptions underlying their efforts. The result: better-understood policies, better-supported policies and, most important, better policies. New Standards, for example, has made learning how to talk about the work it supports a key component.

State leaders need to continue the effort to redesign public education around high standards of achievement for all students. They need to encourage dialogue within communities that changes the vision of public education from an inflexible, one-size-fits-all system to one capable of meeting the diverse needs, interests and aspirations of students. And above all, they need to support the efforts of parents, educators and communities to work successfully together to improve school quality and student achievement. Education reform networks may provide opportunities for some of this needed assistance and support.

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*For help on developing such a strategic plan, see the ECS publication *Building Community Support for Schools: A Practical Guide to Strategic Communications.*

ENDNOTES

1. Cremin, Lawrence A. *The Transformation of the School.* New York: Vintage Books, 1961.

2. Richardson, Joanna. "Inquiring Minds: Teacher to Teacher." *Education Week.* April 17, 1996.

3. Lieberman, Ann, and Milbrey W. McLaughlin. "Networks for Educational Change: Powerful and Problematic." *Phi Delta Kappan.* May 1992.

4. Wohlstetter, Priscilla, and Noelle C. Griffin. *Creating and Sustaining Learning Communities: Early Lessons From Charter Schools.* Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, March 1997.

5. Richardson, 1996.

6. Slavin, Robert E. *Sand, Bricks and Seeds: School Change Strategies and Readiness for Reform.* Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University, June 1995.

APPENDIX A

A Guide to Major Reform Networks

The following appendix is a chart describing 34 national school reform networks. The chart is split into the three categories defined in the document: whole-school designs, curriculum and program networks. This chart is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather to provide a sampling of networks that are national in scope and have a track record of some kind with teachers, students and families. All of the networks included serve teachers in a professional development capacity. Many of them are successful on a continuum of indicators.

How To Use the Chart

The first column for every network includes basic information on the network and an acronym used for for the remainder of the row. Whole-school design networks that are affiliated with New American Schools have the NAS acronym included in the column. Headings were chosen from issues that policymakers should consider when choosing a reform network.

The chart is designed to help policymakers determine what type of reform networks to support in their state. For example, State Q may need to bolster reading efforts, and the chart has examples of a number of networks that focus on reading. Success for All, for example, focuses on reading for at-risk students, and, at first glance, State Q officials may think it is the best choice. The schools in State Q, however, may not have the capacity to add a facilitator, reading tutors and social workers as liaisons or make the changes needed to implement Success for All. A better match for State Q may be the Coalition of Essential Schools, which provides a set of principles. This example is not meant to scare policymakers away from Success for All, but instead to illustrate the complexity and interdependence of some networks, especially whole-school designs. The key is thoughtfully to assess what states, districts and schools need and match networks for a "best fit" of design.

Finally, as with most charts of this type, as soon as it is in print, it is outdated. Much of the information for the chart came from a combination of sources: World Wide Web sites, network marketing materials and a survey. To make good decisions about networks, the best information comes from discussions with participants actively involved in the networks and with network leaders.

ECS invites readers to send additional information about other education reform networks to: Debra Banks, ECS, 707 17th St., Suite 2700, Denver, CO 80202-3427.

Networks: Whole-School Designs

Network	Philosophy	Emphasis/Focus	Organizational Capacity	Standards & Assessments
Accelerated Schools Project (ASP) CERAS 109 Stanford University Stanford, CA 94305-3084 Claudette Sprague 650-725-1676 www-leland.stanford.edu group ASP	Accelerated Schools target at-risk students, yet were designed as a systemwide approach to reform. The core beliefs are that all kids can learn and that schools should accelerate, not remediate, students to close the achievement gap between at-risk and more advantaged students.	The focus of this approach is to bring at-risk students into the education mainstream by the end of elementary school. Three principles and a commitment to powerful learning opportunities guide the schools: unity of purpose, empowerment coupled with responsibility, and building on strengths.	Accelerated Schools began in 1985-86 with two elementary schools and has grown to over 1,000 elementary and middle schools in 40 states. Satellite regional centers support the growing network, while Stanford is the national center.	Accelerated Schools use a variety of approaches in assessing students. Student performance is gauged through standardized tests, portfolios of student work, student and staff attendance, parental participation and reductions in student transfers.
ATLAS Communities Education (NAS) 55 Chapel Street Newton, MA 02158-1060 Linda Gerstle 617-969-7100 www.info.med.yale.edu comer/atlas.html	The primary goal in an ATLAS classroom is building skills, habits and understanding. Five principles guide the approach: teaching & learning are driven by questions and focus on understanding; ongoing cycles of planning, action and reflection characterize effective teaching; relationships matter; shared leadership is essential for collaborative learning; and members see themselves as part of learning communities.	ATLAS Communities support schools that wish to become extended, democratic learning communities. Fundamental to the design is a K-12 pathway which links elementary, middle and high schools to jointly implement the ATLAS approach.	There are 56 ATLAS schools in 10 pathways in six states. ATLAS is a cooperative effort with the Coalition of Essential Schools, Project Zero, the School Development Program and the Education Development Center. New American Schools revenue supports the design, while schools pay a fee to support ongoing design implementation.	Students demonstrate their understanding through a variety of assessments such as projects, portfolios and performance exhibitions. These assessments are created by the total team of pathway teachers based on locally defined standards.
Audrey Cohen College (ACC) (NAS) 75 Varick Street New York, NY 10013-1919 Janith Jordan 212-343-1234 www.audrey-cohen.edu	For each semester's academic goals, Audrey Cohen focuses student learning on the study and achievement of "meaningful purposes" that contribute to the world at large. For example, kindergarten children explore a "family-school partnership." This holistic approach is developmentally centered.	Students achieve the semester's "Purpose" by planning, carrying out and evaluating a "Constructive Action Plan" in which they use their knowledge and skills to benefit the community and the larger world. Instead of taking classes by subject area, students take "Dimension" classes which integrate a variety of skills and concepts as they relate to the "Purpose" of study.	To date, there are 16 schools in six states. A three-year commitment is required to join the network. New American Schools revenue supports the design, while schools pay a fee to support ongoing design implementation.	Schools will meet and exceed existing state standards. In addition, Audrey Cohen has identified 25 essential abilities that students must develop at every level to carry out successful "Constructive Actions" and achieve their "Purposes."
Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) Brown University PO Box 1969 Providence, RI 02912 Amy Gierstein 401-863-1252 www.home.aisr.brown.edu ces	Nine Common Principles: intellectual focus; simplicity; universal goals for all students; personalized teaching/learning; diplomas awarded upon demonstration of mastery; high expectations/low stress; governing metaphor: student-as-worker, teacher-as-coach; principals and teachers are generalists first and specialists second; teacher load: 80 or fewer students; per-pupil cost should not exceed traditional school costs by more than 10%.	While the Nine Common Principles are the foundation of CES schools, each school's implementation is determined at the local site. There is no set formula to follow; the Coalition supports individual and innovative solutions to school problems.	CES, housed at Brown University with support from various foundations, has over 1,000 schools in its network. They are either "exploring," "planning" or "member schools." Regional networking and annual conferences bring everyone together.	Coalition schools use standards developed at each school by those closest to the students. Students master a number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. Classes build toward student exhibitions and portfolios, and use some subject-area testing.
Community Learning Centers (CLC) 1355 Pierce Butler Rte. Ste.100 St. Paul, MN 55104-1359 Wayne Jennings 612-645-0200 www.designlearn.com	The purpose of CLC is to create schools that engage students to attain five outcomes: be a productive learner, responsible citizen, problem-solver, self-directed lifelong learner and creative healthy individual. CLC does not aim to tune up schools or programs; instead, it examines all assumptions about education in schools.	CLC sites are charter schools or contracted schools. Curriculum, based on achieving high standards through powerful learning experiences, is arrived at by designing down from the outcomes. Learning is experiential and child-centered; students and advisors use personal learning plans to monitor progress.	CLC has schools in MN and CA. CLC is supported by Designs for Learning, a consultant group in St. Paul. Additional support comes from the C.S. Mott Foundation. Because most of the schools are charters, support also is provided by the chartering authority.	Standards are benchmarked at grades 4, 8 and 12 in the national goals subjects of math, science, English, geography, history and the arts. Assessment of achievement is embedded in daily student work. Evaluations include competency expectations, exhibitions and presentations, checked against nationally normed tests and community-established standards.

Builds Capacity in Schools/Districts	Builds Capacity in Community	Network Expansion	Evaluation
Coaching and regional national school support are central to ASP's work. The ASP implementation guide includes a framework for: establishing a unity of purpose among the school community, creating the capacity for governance changes, and addressing and analyzing priority challenge areas through the "inquiry process."	Parent involvement is an important piece of implementation. ASP reaches out to the community through direct parent involvement in the school.	ASP adds schools one at a time to the network. It is launching a project to work with districts in whole-school change processes. ASP is working with a few states to expand the network through state dissemination activities.	A number of external evaluations have been conducted. In 1993 and 1995, studies showed an increase in test scores, student and staff morale, and a decline of discipline problems against a matched control school in the same district.
Before a school adopts ATLAS, it embarks on an exploratory year in which participants read, observe, discuss and decide whether or not to engage in the ATLAS framework. Pathways form a two-year partnership with ATLAS. Support is provided through electronic and professional networking.	Parents and community members are mentors to students working in the community, volunteers in the school and classrooms, and members of the school management team.	Teachers form study groups to improve instruction and curriculum; principals play a critical role in creating a school climate conducive to the ATLAS philosophy.	In 1996, ATLAS reported that achievement gains were made in two pathways on state standardized tests. One pathway reported a decrease in dropout rate, and all pathways reported an increase in student engagement. Other indicators of success are provided by gains in school climate surveys, and changes in staff morale and increased parent participation.
An initial five-day orientation prepares the school to use the Audrey Cohen design. A staff resource specialist works within the school, while a liaison works with the principal and district to realign district and state policies to support "Purpose-centered" education.	The "Purposes" help the school and its teachers identify key community resources and members who can be involved. They also help the school become active partners in improving the community.	Schools are added to the network one at a time. Collaboration among teachers is essential to the successful implementation and expansion of the design.	Student performance on standardized achievement and local criterion-referenced tests have met or exceeded school and district expectations. In all participating schools, attendance rates have increased, and discipline problems have decreased.
CES provides support through: annual conferences, summer institutes, professional development opportunities, onsite CES facilitators. Many districts engage a CES district facilitator to support activities within individual schools and work with administrative issues such as smaller class sizes and funding.	There is little evidence of parent involvement and outreach as a result of participation in the network. Parent involvement may be a component of individual schools.	CES schools are whole-school designs that expand by adding schools to the existing network. CES is working with a few states to expand the network through state dissemination activities.	Much evaluation has been done on Coalition schools. Research shows fewer discipline cases, lower dropout rates and more CES students going on to higher education than non-CES students in comparison district studies. Academic performance in some CES schools also has improved.
Staff development occurs approximately 20-30 days a year and is based on a professional development plan which staff members maintain. Designs for Learning supports individual schools with tailored services such as resources, budgeting, and other school management and technical skills.	CLC sites are community-based. Many of them have extended hours year-round. Schools are open to the community and operate programs for broad community participation.	CLC is expanding nationally to increase the number of schools in its network, specifically working with charter schools.	Not available.

Network	Philosophy	Emphasis/Focus	Organizational Capacity	Standards & Assessments
Co-NECT Schools (NAS) 70 Fawcett Street Cambridge, MA 02138 Diana Nunnaley 617-873-5612 www.co-nect.bbn.com	Co-NECT begins with an emphasis on academic excellence through challenging classrooms, learning by doing, and the best available technology. Co-NECT assists schools in creating and maintaining their own high-tech equipment and network, and uses technology to enhance every aspect of teaching, learning, professional development and school management.	Schools are organized around small clusters of students taught by a cross-disciplinary team which focuses on interdisciplinary projects that promote critical thinking and academic understanding. Students remain in the cluster for at least two years. Originally targeting urban schools, Co-NECT has expanded into other school settings.	There are 50 schools in seven states. Co-NECT is partners with BBN Corp., the MA Corp. for Education Telecommunications, Earthwatch, CSTEEP and the University of Michigan. Most schools work intensively for three years with Co-NECT. Costs vary according to school size and the presence of technology. NAS revenue supports the design.	CSTEEP (Center for the Study of Testing, Evaluation and Education Policy at Boston College) has worked to create a set of standards that meet or exceed state standards. Students keep portfolios which are reviewed periodically by teachers, students and parents.
Core Knowledge Foundation (CK) 2012-B Morton Dr Charlottesville, VA 22903 Mary Lusk 804-977-7550 www.coreknowledge.com	Core Knowledge is based on E.D. Hirsch's book, *"Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know."* Core Knowledge specifies a common core curriculum for students. The process of how to teach is left up to the teachers within each school.	The Core Knowledge Sequence provides a planned progression of specific knowledge in language arts, history, geography, math, science and fine arts, so that students build on knowledge from year to year in grades K-6.	There are 12 Core Knowledge Schools located in seven states, and over 340 schools in 36 states are using the Core Knowledge Sequence. The Core Knowledge Foundation supports teachers and schools using Core Knowledge curriculum materials.	Tests specific to the content base of Core Knowledge are available. Most students also take standardized tests to measure achievement.
Edison Project 521 Fifth Avenue 16th Floor New York, NY 10175 Deborah Doorack 212-309-1644 www.edisonproject.com	The purpose of Edison is to "provide an education rooted in democratic values, academic excellence and that prepares all students for productive lives."	Edison tries to bring all of education's "best practices" under one design. It features smaller classes called "learning academies," a strong technology component and a longer school day and year. Edison uses the Success For All reading program in its primary schools and has a strong emphasis on math.	Edison establishes partnership schools either under contract with public school districts or charter school authorities within the local community. Edison is a privately funded, for-profit company that has recently raised $30.5 million to support new school openings in 1997 and 1998.	Edison has developed a set of standards and performance measures designed to evaluate students' progress toward meeting the standards that shape curriculum. Students take multiple assessments as well as standardized tests. Quarterly contracts are used to direct student learning.
Effective Schools (ES) 2199 Jolly Road Suite 160 Okemos, MI 48864 Larry Lezotte 517-349-8841 www.effectiveschools.com	The key beliefs of ES are: all children can learn and have the right to do so; schools have sufficient control over enough of the variables to ensure that all students learn; schools should be held accountable for student results; and schools should work to be certain that all students regardless of race, gender, ethnicity or social class, are successfully learning the intended curriculum.	ES is dedicated to advancing the vision of successful learning for all children. ES approaches school change from three points: staff and organizational development, and planned change. ES attends to four guiding principles for change: focus on the school, the principal can't do it alone, school improvement is a process, and those involved in the change effort must have had a choice in the matter.	ES has been in existence for over 25 years and has been implemented in thousands of school districts nationwide.	ES requires that schools adhere to a set of rigorous standards and measure progress frequently through a variety of assessment procedures. The results of these assessments are intended to measure individual student performance and also improve the instructional program.
Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) (NAS) 122 Mount Auburn St. Cambridge, MA 02138 Meg Campbell 617-576-1260 www.elob.com	ELOB is a K-12 design based on 10 principles that focus on learning as an expedition into the unknown. ELOB draws on the power of purposeful investigations to improve student achievement and build character. Service, physical activity and reflection are as much a part of the design as building basic skills.	Learning expeditions are long-term interdisciplinary studies that require students to work cooperatively inside and outside the classroom. Teachers team to work as facilitators and educational guides with students for a multiyear approach. Expeditions include intellectual, service and physical components.	To date, 47 schools exist in 13 states. ELOB partners with Outward Bound schools across the nation. Partner organizations include: the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Facing History. Revenue from NAS supports the design, while schools pay a fee to support ongoing design implementation.	ELOB has designed a set of standards for students that are aligned with national standards. Included in these are character, fitness, communication, scientific thinking and historical understanding. Students complete a senior project. Assessments include performance-based exhibitions, portfolios and other authentic assessments.

Builds Capacity in Schools/Districts	Builds Capacity in Community	Network Expansion	Evaluation
Co-NECT provides assistance in technology planning, training and membership in the Co-NECT School Exchange, an Internet-based information service and electronic forum for school participants. Onsite professional development is ongoing. In addition, a Co-NECT "critical friend" is assigned to each school. Teleconferences bring the schools together.	Co-NECT reaches out to the community through direct parent involvement in the school.	Co-NECT schools build capacity through technology, linking families together through school networks.	A number of Co-NECT schools have shown gains in achievement against standardized or state tests in Worcester, MA, Dade Co., FL and in Memphis, TN. Student engagement and parent involvement have increased in Co-NECT schools.
The Core Knowledge Foundation provides content guidelines for grades K-6. Training, model lessons, guides to resources and networking opportunities such as annual conferences offer support to implementing educators.	Parent involvement has been high in Core Knowledge schools, especially in charter schools, where parents have a greater role in school design and operation.	Core Knowledge adds schools one at a time. Many Core Knowledge schools are charter schools, which increases the buy-in of teachers to the curriculum and school focus.	A longitudinal assessment of the effectiveness of Core Knowledge is in progress. Preliminary findings include students gain self-confidence, students connect to material learned previously, students are interested in learning, particularly reading.
Start-up assistance is provided through Edison's project managers, Edison's New York staff and onsite facilitators who provide help throughout the school year. School staffs also attend national and regional professional development conferences.	Edison schools build community ties through a variety of before- and after-school programs; through the activities of a full-time community resource director; through an electronic, online communications program; and through each site's parent advisory council and "board of friends."	Edison builds capacity in schools through careful training of the school's leadership team before a site opens, through ongoing professional development for teachers and through close contact between Edison's New York staff and site staffs.	An in-depth assessment was conducted on the first four Edison schools. Achievement data are inconclusive, but provide baseline data for continued research. Edison received high ratings of customer satisfaction in independent surveys.
ES has developed a variety of products that guide educators through the Effective Schools Improvement Process (ESIP). The ESIP is a framework that includes the necessary tools to engage in long-term systemic change. Technical assistance is available to principals and administrators in schools and districts.	The ESIP includes building and sustaining an authentic partnership between parents and educators. Larger community participation is not mentioned.	ES does not actively recruit new schools to join the network. There are no plans for network expansion.	ES guides schools to measure their success against a set of correlates that all schools should have: a safe and orderly environment, a climate of high expectations for success, instructional leadership, clear and focused mission, opportunity to learn and student time on task, and frequent monitoring of student progress. Research conducted in the 1980s showed gains in student achievement.
Educators take an Outward Bound course to experience ELOB principles in action. Staff development is considered a key activity in building learning expeditions for students. ELOB supports schools with a facilitator who helps guide teachers in their planning of expeditions.	Community service is a part of learning expeditions and requires student engagement in many facets of the community. As a result, community is brought into schools in a way that expands parent involvement models. Other involvement includes: performance exhibitions, learning expeditions and shared governance models.	ELOB expands the network one school at a time. School capacity is built through professional development opportunities and through the ELOB facilitator assigned to each school.	The Academy of Education Development conducted an evaluation of the effectiveness of ELOB schools. Early information on achievement shows gains in reading and on state-specific comprehensive tests. Attendance has increased in ELOB schools, and students report being more engaged in learning.

Network	Philosophy	Emphasis/Focus	Organizational Capacity	Standards & Assessments
Galef Institute: Different Ways of Knowing (DWoK) 11050 Santa Monica Blvd. 3rd Floor Los Angeles, CA 90025-3594 Sue Beauregard 310-479-8883 www.dwoknet.galef.org	Galef is a nonprofit organization whose primary goal is to collaborate with educators in creating and implementing programs that help children develop positive attitudes toward learning, school and themselves. DWoK connects an interdisciplinary history and social studies curriculum that integrates literature, the arts, writing, reading, math and science.	DWoK is an inquiry-based, arts-infused, interdisciplinary K-7 whole-school change effort focusing on at-risk students. The arts are integral to DWoK classrooms, with teachers applying the visual and performing arts as learning strategies and tools for self-expression that lead to developing literacy in the arts.	There are approximately 4,500 teachers in six states participating in DWoK, with an average of 10 teachers per school. Support for the Galef Institute comes from foundations, local and national businesses, and participating schools, districts and states.	DWoK students are measured by a variety of performance assessments: portfolios, demonstrations of learning through diverse media, drama, artistic works, writing and oral language. Standardized achievement tests are also used by districts.
Modern Red Schoolhouse (MRSH) (NAS) 208 23rd Avenue North Nashville, TN 37203 Ron Heady 615-320-8804 www.mrsh.org	MRSH seeks to make all students high achievers in core academic subjects by building on the virtues of traditional American education. The core principles of MRSH are that all students can and will reach high academic standards, and that mastery of subject matter is the only acceptable goal, regardless of background, learning style or race.	MRSH uses E.D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge curriculum for primary and middle grades, while the upper levels rely on the James Madison series developed by the U.S. Dept. of Education. Critical-thinking skills and cultural understanding of diverse nations and people round out the curriculum. Technology plays a support role in instruction delivery and school management.	MRSH is in operation in 39 schools in nine states. It partners with a number of research institutions; the Hudson Institute is the organization from which the design was created and is overseen. Revenue from NAS supports MRSH, while schools pay a fee to support ongoing design implementation.	MRSH has adopted standards that reflect the expectations in Core Knowledge. Students are tested using NAEP exams and Advanced Placement tests in upper grades. Various assessments including "watershed assessments" determine student advancement. "Individual education compacts" monitor student progress. Wisconsin has recently modeled its state standards on MRSH's.
Montessori Public School Consortium N.A. Montessori Teachers Assoc. 11424 Bellflower Rd. NE Cleveland, OH 44106 David Kahn 216-421-1905 www.montessori.org	Montessori supporters believe that human intelligence is greatly influenced by environment rather than being fixed at birth, and that children have a natural curiosity for learning. Children go through certain developmental stages and learning should coincide with those stages. Children learn independently, using their environment maximally.	Montessori educators aid the development of the child's mental, spiritual and physical personality through cultivating independence and freedom of choice. Learning environments are created by teachers for the children to explore, and build competencies and problem-solving skills. Team teachers respond to individuals in multiage classrooms.	Montessori schools have a full-service set of products and assistance from specific materials for purchase to methodology of implementation. There are national and international societies, the Montessori Public School Consortium, a Montessori teachers' association and many education centers nationally.	Students are measured by standardized achievement tests used by districts.
National Alliance for Restructuring Education (NAS) 700 11th Street, NW Suite 750 Washington, DC 20001 Marc Tucker 202-783-3668 www.ncee.org/OurPrograms/overview.html	The Alliance is committed to working with states, schools and districts to make the changes necessary to enable all but the most severely disabled students to meet a standard of accomplishment that is set as high as the best performing countries. Unlike other NAS designs, the Alliance does not provide a design to be replicated; it provides resources for locally developed reform.	The Alliance concentrates its efforts on a five-point set of tasks: standards and assessments, learning environments, high-performance school management, community services and supports, and public engagement. Alliance schools are driven by standards, specifically those needed to reach CIM. Students acquire a deep content base and the ability to apply it to real-world problems.	The Alliance is in 300 schools in 25 states. The National Center on Education and the Economy oversees it. Partners include: Apple Computer, Jobs for the Future, Pew Charitable Trusts and the Xerox Corporation. Revenue from NAS partially supports the Alliance. Schools and states pay a fee depending on the level of service provided.	Alliance schools use the New Standards or locally designed standards [aligned with the New Standards and the Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM)] as their system of standards and assessments. Portfolios and performance indicators assess students' progress toward reaching the CIM.
National Paideia Center (NPC) School of Ed. CB #8045 Univ. of North Carolina Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8045 Terry Roberts 919-962-7379 www.unc.edu/depts/edcel/paideia.html	The NPC's goals are to prepare each student for work, citizenship and lifelong learning. Paideia educators believe all children can learn, and it is our duty to provide the opportunity. A fundamental belief is that universal quality education is essential to democracy.	The goals of Paideia are "acquisition of knowledge," "development of intellectual skills" and "enlarged understanding of ideas and values." These are addressed through three instructional approaches: didactic instruction, coaching while students work independently and small-group seminars, usually using the Socratic method.	NPC partners with over 59 schools in 12 states. Center policy targets growth governed by program quality. The National Paideia Center is housed at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and receives some foundation support.	The National Paideia Center advocates rigorous, locally developed standards in a core curriculum.

Builds Capacity in Schools/Districts	Builds Capacity in Community	Network Expansion	Evaluation
Galef supports DWoK with a three-year course of professional growth for teachers, through summer institutes, seminars and workshops, in-class demonstrations and planning guides.	DWoK reaches out to the community through direct parent involvement in the school.	Schools are added to the network one at a time.	A four-year longitudinal study on DWoK showed significant gains in language arts for each year of participation and increases in social studies content knowledge, motivation and attitudes about school. Teachers' instructional skills and practices improved and had positive effects as a result of involvement in DWoK.
MRSH facilitators work with schools developing curriculum. Summer institutes are used to immerse teachers and principals in MRSH design features, as well as how to write and develop foundation units.	This is not an emphasized element of the design.	Schools are added to the network one at a time. Eighty percent of a school staff must be in favor of the design before implementation.	Increases in achievement have been recorded in a number of the elementary schools. Absenteeism and disciplinary problems decreased in all schools.
Training, staff development, resources and materials are available for educators using the Montessori method. Regional and national conferences bring educators together to broaden thinking.	Montessori reaches out to the community through direct parent involvement in the school.	Montessori schools operate as private schools, magnet schools in districts, programs within schools and, most recently, charter schools.	Onsite evaluation of programs are conducted by Montessori specialists.
Technical assistance takes many forms: in developing curriculum aligned with the standards, in using standards-based planning systems, for job-to-work systems based on academic performance, for design and implementation of systems for school organization and for onsite school seminars to understand the components and requirements of Alliance schools.	Alliance schools work to organize health and social services to children and families through the school. Community involvement is usually tapped through town meetings or other public engagement avenues.	Expansion occurs primarily by providing professional development opportunities for teams of educators at the state and local levels to continue working on implementation of the five design tasks.	There is little data on all of the Alliance schools. Schools in Kentucky showed improvements in achievement against other schools within the state. Because the Alliance states that change will occur at policy levels, indicators of success must also reflect changes in policies and practices.
Paideia coordinators provide onsite training in the Socratic method and support teachers in identifying and building resource materials. NPC staff then follow up the original training with monthly onsite technical support. The national center establishes model schools, directs professional development and provides technical assistance.	Paideia reaches out to the community through direct parent involvement in the school.	Training efforts focus on whole-school communities, sending experienced staff members into a local community to train all the teachers and administrators, as well as parents from a school.	Recent trends in states where student writing skills are tested at the state level suggest a strong correlation between the Paideia seminar practiced schoolwide and writing scores. Although further research is being planned, there is evidence that students in Paideia schools are learning to think, speak and write with power and precision across the disciplines.

Network	Philosophy	Emphasis/Focus	Organizational Capacity	Standards & Assessments
New American Schools (NAS) 1000 Wilson Boulevard Suite 2710 Arlington, VA 22209 John Anderson 703-908-9500 www.naschools.org	New American Schools is a coalition formed for one purpose: to dramatically improve American education. There are seven "break-the-mold" designs that encompass a variety of strategies for school transformation. Many districts implement a variety of designs vs. adopting a single program.	Each of the seven designs is unique; however, they share these goals: students will meet high standards, students will demonstrate mastery of knowledge, technology will be used, schools will use site-based decisionmaking, teachers will get professional development necessary for successful students, and all educators will be held accountable for their performance.	To date, over 700 NAS schools are operating in 30 states. Districts engage in a partnership with NAS to understand the costs and structural supports needed to ensure the success of NAS designs.	NAS designs adhere to standards and assessments that the specific designs have developed or promised accountability to. See the specific designs (marked with "NAS" on the chart) for more information.
Onward to Excellence (OTE) NWREL School Improvement Program 101 S.W. Main St., Ste. 500 Portland, OR 97204 Robert Blum 503-275-9500 www.nwrel.org scpd ote	NWREL's OTE is a school-based management and improvement process developed at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. The process helps schools apply effective schools (see ES) research to improve student achievement and engage schools in a continuous improvement cycle.	The 10-step process begins by creating a leadership team that leads the whole school through a process that includes collecting data, setting goals, forming and implementing a plan, evaluating progress and entering a new improvement cycle.	OTE was piloted in 15 schools in three states between 1981 and 1984. To date, it has been used in over 1,300 schools in 12 states, 25 schools in two U.S. territories and 14 schools in two foreign countries.	Schools involved in OTE set their own standards, either creating their own, or adhering to district or state standards already in place.
Roots and Wings (RW) (NAS) Johns Hopkins Univ. C.S.O.S. 3505 N. Charles Street Baltimore, MD 21218 Lawrence Dolan 410-516-8806 www.csos.jhu.edu sfa	Roots and Wings is centered on the belief that every child will progress successfully through the elementary grades no matter what it takes. The goal is to ensure every child a firm foundation in the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in today's world and to use that knowledge critically in gaining higher-order problem-solving skills.	Roots and Wings builds on the Success for All reading program (see below) and incorporates reading, history and math to create an academic learning program. Roots and Wings schools provide at-risk students with tutors, family support systems and other services aimed at eliminating barriers to success.	Operating in 197 schools in 17 states, RW builds on the success of Success for All. Most of the implementation costs are covered by Title 1 funds and reallocating existing resources in schools. The Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools and Maryland State Department of Education are partners in this effort.	Students are expected to master broadly accepted standards in all academic areas. Mathwings uses the standards set by NCTM. Achievement is measured through the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test and other identified state achievement tests. Performance tests, portfolios and writing samples also evaluate student gains.
School Development Program (SDP) Yale Child Study Ctr. 230 Frontage Road PO Box 3333 New Haven, CT 06510 James Comer 203-785-2548 www.info.med.yale.edu comer cozi.html	The School Development program is committed to the total development of all children by creating learning environments that support children's physical, cognitive, psychological, language, social and ethical development. "We believe it takes a whole village to raise a child," SDP says.	SDP uses an essential nine component process - three guiding principles, three mechanisms for development and three operations: no-fault problem-solving, consensus decisionmaking and collaboration; School Planning Management Team, Mental Health Team, Parent Team; comprehensive school plan, staff development, and assessment and modification.	The School Development Program is in 600+ schools in 21 states, plus Tobago, Trinidad and England. The SDP is supported by the Yale Child Study Center and various foundations.	Not applicable.
Success for All (SFA) Johns Hopkins Univ. C.S.O.S. 3505 N. Charles Street Baltimore, MD 21218 Lawrence Dolan 800-548-4998 www.csos.jhu.edu sfa	SFA is built on the assumption that all students can read and that, although it may take longer for some than others, success is attainable and maintainable for all. Success For All believes success in early grades is critical for future success in school. SFA was developed as a focused intervention for at-risk students in urban schools.	SFA's intent is to ensure no student will ever receive remediation or be retained in a grade. Whole-day kindergarten, building basic skills, performance grouping and one-on-one reading instruction are part of the program. SFA differs from other designs in that it moves children along using whatever resources are needed to prevent students from failing.	Success for All is operating in 729 schools in 37 states. SFA also is translated into Spanish, supporting bilingual students. Before a school adopts SFA, 80% of the staff must support the program. SFA can operate on Chapter 1 funds, which account for most of the program's cost.	Success for All employs a rigorous assessment program, evaluating students every eight weeks for signs of performance at grade level.

Builds Capacity in Schools/Districts	Builds Capacity in Community	Network Expansion	Evaluation
NAS provides a variety of support functions to schools and districts using school designs. "Design fairs" allow educators to get a better understanding of what the designs are and what they have to offer. All of the professional development required by a school is provided directly by the specific NAS design. See the specific design for more information.	NAS itself does not seek to build community, except through the designs that have community components in them. See the specific design for more information.	Although NAS began by working "one school at a time," 10 districts or states have become NAS "jurisdictions." These jurisdictions have committed to implementing the NAS designs in 30% of their schools within five years.	RAND has been involved in a multiyear study of NAS. Each design is engaged in evaluation efforts on a variety of issues. See the specific design for more information.
OTE is carried out in a series of seven 1.2 day to 1.5 day workshops spread over two years. Initial training in the 10-step process is facilitated by OTE trainers which includes modeling, practicing and applying processes. Teams from six schools train together. Because it is a continuous improvement process, follow-up training and support are provided. Trainer training is also available.	Setting an improvement goal is step four in the 10-step process. This step includes gaining participation from the community.	OTE schools are added to the network one at a time. A school team must first be in place with a strong commitment to the process before engaging in OTE.	OTE is based on effective schools research. Studies have shown gains in student performance and positive changes in staff collegiality and school climate.
RW provides training sessions in all aspects of adopting design components. Visits to other schools using RW before a school adopts the design provide educators with a better understanding of what the design looks like and what it takes to implement. School tutors and onsite facilitators provide local technical assistance.	A school-family support team works to build home-school collaboration to benefit students. The team works with community agencies to alleviate obstacles standing in the way of students' success.	Roots and Wings schools are added to the network one at a time. Eighty percent of a staff must vote for implementation of RW on a secret ballot before moving forward with the design.	Early results show that students are making gains in all areas of achievement on state standardized tests. RW schools outperformed other schools in Maryland on the state performance assessment.
A full-time facilitator at the district (usually designated by the superintendent) provides information, training, support and coaching to four-five schools at a time. The facilitator also accesses resources for the program and monitors progress.	SDP reaches out to the community through direct parent involvement in the school.	A steering committee encourages program expansion and acts as a conduit to the superintendent. The steering committee comprises participants from schools, parent organizations, the central office and unions.	Three strategies are employed: surveys; interviews of parents, students, teachers, principals and other school personnel; and theory development.
Reading tutors and staff support are a critical feature of SFA schools. Two social workers and a parent liaison also work full time in SFA schools. A full-time facilitator works with the principal and staff to supervise the SFA model. Staff development is ongoing as well as an initial three-day onsite training. Follow-up training is provided as needed.	Parent involvement is critical. School social workers and a parent liaison work with parents on a variety of skills to enable students to come to school ready to learn and be successful. Some schools have a parent resource center; all schools have a liaison.	Success for All reaches out to the community through direct parent involvement in the school and through the efforts of the liaison and social workers.	Evaluation of SFA has shown that it raises student achievement levels, especially in all reading areas, while reducing retention and special education assignments. In comparison to Reading Recovery (RR), SFA raised the levels of a broader student group, while RR worked with a smaller targeted group of students.

Networks: Curriculum

Network	Philosophy	Emphasis/Focus	Organizational Capacity	Standards & Assessments
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) 1906 Association Dr. Reston, VA 20191-1593 Eileen Erickson 703-620-9840 www.nctm.org	NCTM-developed standards provide a vision of what the mathematics curriculum should include in terms of content priority and emphasis. The challenge is to use these curriculum and evaluation standards as the basis for change to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics.	The standards document is designed to establish a broad framework to guide reform in mathematics. A new draft combining three sets of standards which strengthen the interrelationships among curriculum, teaching and assessment will be available in 1998. The final version is slated for release in the year 2000.	NCTM is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the improvement of mathematics education for all students in the U.S. and Canada. Its more than 117,000 members and 260 affiliated groups create a broad stakeholder group focused on improving the teaching and learning of mathematics.	NCTM has created math standards for the nation to use.
National Writing Project (NWP) Univ. of California 5511 Tolman Hall #1670 Berkeley, CA 94720-1670 Richard Sterling 510-642-0963 www-gse.berkeley.edu Research NWP nwp.html	The NWP is teacher-centered, focused on improving student writing and the teaching of writing in our nation's schools. The three main goals of all NWP sites: to improve students' writing by improving the teaching of writing, to improve university and school professional development programs and to increase the power of classroom teachers.	NWP does not subscribe to a specific approach. Instead, it is open to what works, and disseminates this information while promoting best practices throughout the network. Assumptions include: successful practicing teachers are the best teachers of other teachers, teachers need to be in charge of their own learning and need to write if they are to teach writing.	Within NWP, the Rural and Urban Networks and Project Outreach reach 48 states, Puerto Rico, Canada and Europe. Funding comes from within the network. Teachers contribute $10 per year, host institutions of local NWP sites pay $150 per year, and contributing sponsorships make up a third funding category. Local sites are subsidized by some state funds.	Not applicable.
New Standards (NS) National Ctr. on Education and the Economy 1341 G Street, Ste. 1020 Washington, DC 20035 Eugene Paslov 202-783-3668 www.ncee.org OurPrograms	New Standards began in 1990 to create a system of internationally benchmarked standards for student performance and an assessment system that would measure student performance against the standards. The standards represent the first set of performance standards in these subject areas developed for nationwide use.	The project works in partnership with states and large school districts that collectively teach about half the nation's public schools. It works to set high academic standards and to develop performance assessments to measure the progress of students toward meeting those standards.	New Standards is jointly run by the National Center on Education and the Economy, and the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh.	NS has developed standards in math, English, language arts, science and applied learning at the elementary, middle and high school levels.
Project 2061: Science for All Americans (AAAS) American Assn. for the Advancement of Science 1333 H Street, NW Washington, DC 20005 Mary Koppal 202-326-6400 www.aaas.org	Project 2061 was launched to rethink the way science, mathematics and technology are taught and learned in the nation's schools.	Project 2061 develops tools to help educators evaluate, select and design materials, instruction and assessments that promote science literacy for all students. At the state and national levels, Project 2061 has developed the most comprehensive set of standards adopted concerning science literacy.	AAAS is the world's largest federation of scientists. Project 2061 is supported by grants from the National Science Foundation and a number of other foundations.	Benchmarks for Science Literacy and Science for all Americans became the benchmarks most used in states writing their state science standards. The National Research Council drew heavily on Project 2061 work to develop the content portion of the National Science Education Standards.
Statewide Systemic Initiative (SSI) National Science Foundation (NSF) 4201 Wilson Blvd. Ste.# 875 Arlington, VA 22230 Janice Earle 703-306-1684 www.nsf.gov	The SSI supports the efforts of 24 states and Puerto Rico to establish comprehensive changes in science and mathematics education through the development and alignment of new standards, partnerships, policies and practices.	Large-scale awards are made to stimulate systemic change, principally in K-12 education. The initiative responds to state and local needs, typically covering professional development opportunities, changes in governance, curriculum and instruction, and statewide assessments.	NSF's Office of Systemic Reform was established in 1992 to serve as a focal point for a growing emphasis on systemic reform of the science, mathematics, engineering and technology education infrastructure.	SSI has supported the development and implementation of statewide standards and assessments in math and science. The science frameworks developed by Project 2061 have been linked to Statewide Systemic Initiatives.

Builds Capacity in Schools/Districts	Builds Capacity in Community	Network Expansion	Evaluation
NCTM convenes national and regional conferences annually so that members can come together to learn and discuss issues related to math literacy and teaching. Publications, newsletters and videos also play a part in assisting educators with understanding and implementing the standards.	Not applicable.	NCTM builds capacity individually through membership in the organization.	Not applicable.
Summer Institutes run for five weeks: all day, four days a week with a three-day weekend for writing. Teachers are selected to participate. School-year workshop series last for 10 sessions, each one approximately three hours. Teacher demonstrations, writing, editing and response groups, and reading and research groups form the workshops.	Not applicable.	NWP builds capacity one teacher at a time.	Each NWP site conducts annual project evaluation. Feedback from participants provides information for program refinement. An external evaluation of the project is needed. Some states are currently evaluating their sites.
The NSP collaborates with the National Alliance for Restructuring Education to provide technical assistance on implementing the New Standards.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	The project is working on three components: • Piloting a year-long portfolio assessment system with 50,000 4th, 8th and 10th graders • A national reference test in mathematics • Benchmarking the work of students around the world and gathering information about the appropriate performance levels of American children.
Publications and educator workshops are a main component of Project 2061. Teacher workshops focus on raising awareness levels of science literacies and changing the delivery of instruction to students.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	SRI International recently completed a year-long evaluation of the influence and impact of Project 2061. Results indicate that teacher educators found the workshops very beneficial. Teachers in classrooms increased use of inquiry and discussion as a result of workshop attendance. Further work on affecting teachers in classrooms is a targeted goal.
Monies are directed to states to support professional development in understanding the standards, building instructional capacity to teach concepts and creating assessments that meet the standards.	SSI grants stipulate that a large community base is necessary to achieve the vision of systemic change. Cities and states need to show support for collaborative community efforts in order to be selected to participate.	Dissemination of knowledge from SSI is typically through teacher-to-teacher involvement.	SSI is having a positive effect on the science, math and technology community. Collaboration among K-12 and higher education has increased, and, as greater attention has focused on standards-based reform, the pressure continues for policymakers and practitioners to find ways to serve all students.

Networks: Programs

Network	Philosophy	Emphasis/Focus	Organizational Capacity	Standards & Assessments
Communities in Schools Inc. (CIS) 1199 N. Fairfax Street Alexandria, VA 22314-1436 Jackie Robinson 703-519-8999	CIS is the largest stay-in-school program. Its mission is to champion connecting community resources with schools to help young people learn, stay in school and prepare for life. CIS believes a student's potential is realized only when he or she feels that meeting high standards is not only possible but probable.	CIS's commitment is to create supportive and caring school environments by providing needed services to students. It facilitates caring teams who can bring the community together on behalf of children.	CIS operates in 28 states serving more than 262,000 students annually at more than 1,000 school sites. Local CIS programs are typically nonprofit public private partnerships. State CIS programs are also independently incorporated. Most of the training centers are housed in universities.	Not applicable.
Cross City Campaign (CCC) 407 South Dearborn Suite 1725 Chicago, IL 60605 Patricia Maunsell 312-322-4880	The Cross City Campaign advocates for policies and practices that support transformation of schools - moving authority, resources and accountability to the school level, reconnecting schools with their communities and rethinking the role of school districts.	Cross City supports the work of reform leaders within and across large cities to create high-quality schools for all children. The collective mission is to improve education so that all urban youth are prepared for postsecondary education, work and citizenship.	Cross City is a national organization that enables school reform leaders to share information, mount collective effects and create a national voice for urban schools. Leaders from Denver, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Seattle and Philadelphia are currently involved. Other cities will be added in 1997.	Cross City's Accountability Initiative is working in a number of urban districts. The initiative takes a broad view of accountability practices and performance issues. Information is being collected and analyzed, and interventions and indicators of success are in development stages.
Cornerstones Alliance c/o Developmental Studies Ctr. 2000 Embarcadero Dr. Ste. 305 Oakland, CA 94606-5300 Denise Wood 510-533-0213 www.csalliance.org	Cornerstones' vision of a community of learners is a place where adults and children practice such core values as kindness, respect for others and responsibility, and where children learn important subject matter and develop their intellectual capacity.	The Developmental Studies Center has created programs and research to foster children's intellectual, social and ethical development. Cornerstones works with elementary schools to create a stable, warm and challenging environment where all children can become thoughtful, caring, self-disciplined and principled.	Cornerstones is a school restructuring program implemented in over 65 schools in 20 states.	Not applicable.
Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) 1301 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Suite 702 Washington, DC 20004 Michael Casserly 202-393-CGCS www.cgcs.org	CGCS brings together 50 of the largest urban public school systems in a coalition dedicated to the improvement of education in the inner cities. The council serves as the national voice for urban educators, providing ways to share information about promising practices and address common concerns.	Advocating legislation, research, public advocacy, management, technology and special projects shape the council's activities. The council coordinates conferences, conducts studies and collaborates with other national organizations, government agencies and corporations.	CGCS is a membership organization. Districts pay a fee for membership; the council receives some federal funding and corporate support. Districts are eligible for membership if they are located in cities with populations over 250,000 or have student enrollments over 35,000.	Not applicable.
Foxfire Teacher Outreach PO Box 541 Mountain City, GA 30562 Kim Cannon 706-746-5318 www.foxfire.org	Foxfire believes people learn best when education builds on previous experience, the work teachers and students do together must flow from student desire and concerns, school work must be connected to the surrounding community and the real world, and student work must have an audience beyond the teacher.	Foxfire's emphasis is on supporting an academically sound, learner-centered approach to education. This can be done through whole schools adopting Foxfire principles or by individual teachers working alone.	Foxfire is supported by foundation grants and sales of Foxfire books.	Teachers measure effectiveness of the approach through a variety of classroom assessments, portfolios, performances and feedback from students and parents.

Builds Capacity in Schools/Districts	Builds Capacity in Community	Network Expansion	Evaluation
CIS relocates service providers to work in schools as members of a team serving alongside teachers, principals, other school staff and volunteers. The national and regional centers provide training to school facilitators. Follow-up technical assistance is provided by teams in specific areas of expertise.	CIS builds capacity in communities through connecting CIS students to community resources.	Not applicable.	The Urban Institute conducted a comprehensive evaluation of CIS for the U.S. Departments of Justice, Labor and Education. CIS was found to have a positive impact on at-risk youth, improving attendance rates and academic performance.
Activities include: • Hosting national working meetings • Leadership development programs • Networking across school reform leaders • Publications and information clearinghouse • Creating and promoting action tools for local use around change	Cross City has a School and Community Working Group that builds leadership among community members through a program based on community organizing to build an effective constituency for reform.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Cornerstones is a school-change effort that combines teacher staff development, classroom management and curriculum approaches, materials and teacher reflection structures. Curricular packages, summer institutes and professional development services are provided. National conferences occur annually.	Cornerstones includes building schoolwide community and parent involvement.	Expansion occurs through new districts implementing the program, and by more schools adopting Cornerstones principles within a district already involved.	Research shows that schools with high degrees of "community" show positive outcomes, including increased student performance, attendance rates, motivation to learn and decreased discipline problems, drug use and delinquency. Specific Cornerstones evaluation information is currently being conducted.
CGCS members share concerns and solutions, building on the strength of members and concentrated wealth of experience. CGCS works to keep Congress, the media and the public informed about problems facing urban schools and the critical need to ensure that all students receive an education based on high standards.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Foxfire offers courses to individual teachers through the Teacher Outreach Program. Fourteen regional networks provide support and continuing training to the thousands of teachers who participate.	The Foxfire approach supports students seeking out information in the local community region and making sense of it through writing and community projects. Foxfire books are full of examples of students' participation in chronicling the lives of community members.	Foxfire builds capacity one teacher at a time, although many schools adopt the Foxfire approach and apply it toward delivery of instruction throughout the school.	Not available.

Network	Philosophy	Emphasis/Focus	Organizational Capacity	Standards & Assessments
IMPACT II **The Teachers Network** 285 W. Broadway Ste. 540 New York, NY 10013-2272 Ellen Meyers 212-966-5582 www.teachnet.org	IMPACT II recognizes that when teachers teach better, students achieve more. IMPACT II sites provide teachers with grant money to disseminate successful classroom projects, and then networks these projects to interested educators via workshops, interschool visits and the Internet. IMPACT II also awards grants to teachers to develop their ideas.	IMPACT II is a nationwide nonprofit organization that identifies and connects innovative teachers who exemplify professionalism and creativity within public school systems. The organization provides grants and networking opportunities for teachers in the areas of curriculum, leadership, policy and technology.	Launched in 1979, IMPACT II has established a confederation of 26 sites that have adopted its grants and networking model to support local teachers. Over 30,000 teachers participate in IMPACT II networks; these professionals have reached out to another 500,000 teachers using the network's research-documented teacher-to-teacher development techniques.	Each IMPACT II site publishes an annual catalog of successful K-12 classroom projects developed by teachers in all subject areas and tied to curriculum frameworks. Teach-Net, IMPACT II's web site, features a searchable database of over 500 hands-on projects that are accessible by content area, grade level and geographical region.
League of Professional Schools (LPS) University of Georgia College of Education 124 Aderhold Hall Athens, GA 30602 Lew Allen 706-542-2523	LPS focuses on the individual school as the center of improvement. It is dedicated to improving public education through promoting the school as a professional, democratic workplace. Local staff initiate and implement schoolwide instructional improvements. Each school devises its own method of shared governance to strengthen leadership.	LPS assists schools to create democratic communities. A major premise is that the people in the schools best know and care about their students, their programs and the possibilities for improvement.	There are over 105 league schools in Georgia, 17 in Nevada, 11 in Broward County, Florida, and 41 in Washington. The league is funded and supported by the College of Education at the University of Georgia and foundation grants. Other funding is state specific (e.g., Washington uses a Goals 2000 grant to offset costs).	Not applicable.
Public Education Network (PEN) 601 13th St. NW Suite 900 North Washington, DC 20005-3808 Michelle Hynes 202-628-7460 www.publiceducation.org	PEN's work is grounded in the belief that high-quality public education is fundamental to a democratic, civil and prosperous society. Values that shape PEN's work: public schools are critical for breaking the cycle of poverty and redressing social inequities; parents, caregivers and community involvement are essential to the success of public education; education reform must be systemic.	PEN's mission is to assist local education funds (LEFs) and other organizations in uniting and engaging their communities in building systems of public schools that result in high achievement for every child. PEN, a national nonprofit, works with LEFs to increase their organizational strength and build their capacity to work toward systemic reform.	PEN grew out of the Public Education Fund (PEF), a Ford Foundation initiative established in 1983 to improve education for low-income and minority children, primarily in urban areas. PEN represents 45 LEFs in 84 communities that work in over 250 urban and rural school districts in 26 states. The work of LEFs impacts nearly five million students — 11% of U.S. students.	Not applicable.
Quality Education Network for Minorities (QEM) 1818 N. St. NW Suite 350 Washington, DC 20036 Shirley McBay 202-659-1818 http://qemnetwork.qem.org	The QEM Network is dedicated to improving education for minorities throughout the nation. QEM's goals center on school readiness, preparedness to learn, reaching high academic standards, increasing participation in higher education, strengthening the teaching force, strengthening school-to-work transitions, and providing quality out-of-school experiences for minorities.	QEM works with other agencies around the country to coordinate and energize collective efforts to improve education for minorities. QEM disseminates information, assists communities in building alliances to meet the needs of minority students, monitors education policy and practices that affect the education of minority students and implements programs to develop model approaches for improving education.	QEM receives its core operating support from the Carnegie Corporation and project support from several foundations and federal agencies.	Not applicable. Many of QEM's projects support setting and achieving high standards for minority students.

Builds Capacity in Schools/Districts	Builds Capacity in Community	Network Expansion	Evaluation
IMPACT II's National Teacher Leadership Project (NTLP) selects and supports a growing number of teacher leaders in undertaking school restructuring to improve teaching practices. NTLP teachers focus on creating learning communities; team building; developing student-centered, interdisciplinary curriculum; school restructuring and school community linkages.	IMPACT II's School Community Partnerships Project supports teachers in mobilizing both their schools and their communities to collaborate on specific school reform efforts. Partnerships include the development of a community learning center, an intergenerational competence-based teaching and learning project, and a school-based service learning project.	IMPACT II builds capacity by adding individual teachers to the existing network.	Two evaluations (1983 and 1993) have been conducted by Teachers College, Columbia University. The evaluations showed that for every teacher who receives an IMPACT II grant, an average of 24 other teachers are affected. This professional development resulted in improvement in teaching style, student attendance and discipline.
A two-day orientation and planning workshop for a school team jumpstarts a school. League facilitators act as "critical friends" and provide onsite facilitation. Summer institutes provide in-depth work for school teams. In addition, the league holds quarterly meetings, distributes newsletters and networks schools through annual conferences.	Not applicable.	Through networking, the league is a school-to-school strategy.	An impact survey reports improvement in faculty teaching and learning. A slight correlation was found between student achievement and implementation of the league's premise in elementary schools. Prior to the initiative in Florida, seven schools were on a "critical list" slated for takeover. Ninety percent of these schools have since been removed from the list.
PEN has strengthened the capacity of LEFs to act as conveners and brokers in their communities and unite diverse constituencies in making education a community priority. PEN expands LEFs' knowledge base on these reform areas at both state and federal levels: governance, finance, education leadership, curriculum and assessment, and schools and communities.	Through cooperation with businesses and other community-based organizations, PEN is helping to build communities' capacity to hold schools accountable for high expectations and quality public education.	Members of PEN are nonprofit community-based organizations. LEFs join PEN based on a sliding membership-fee scale.	Not available.
QEM offers technical assistance and professional development through each project. Many of the projects focus on engaging minority students in the fields of math and science. The QEM Teacher Leadership Corps is supported by the Annenberg Foundation. Other programs include apprenticeships with NASA and NSF.	Community Resource and Service Centers are two programs that QEM operates directly involving communities.	QEM projects build capacity in students and adults.	Not available.

APPENDIX B

Research /Evaluation Reports on Reform Networks

Accelerated Schools Project

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